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ALNWICK

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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R E P O R T

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M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1955.

To the Chairman and Members of the Alnwick Urban District Council.

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for the year 1955, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 17/55.

Since my appointment in June 1955, I have received every consideration and help from my predecessor Dr. R. Keenlyside and wish to record my sincere appreciation. I am happy to report that Dr. Keenlyside agreed shortly after my appointment to act on my behalf during my absences on holidays etc. This honorary service renders invaluable assistance and I am very grateful for it.

The estimated population shows a drop of 130 over last year, while the number of births increased by 14; the rate of 19.67 per 1,000 population being higher than that for England and Wales, (15).

The Infant Mortality rate (20.83) compares very favourably with the national rate of 24.9 per 1,000 live births and the county average of 26.75. It is to be regretted that the Stillbirth rate of 33.55 per total live and stillbirths cannot be viewed in the same light. The national and county rates are 23.2 and 23.23 respectively.

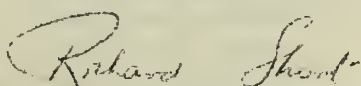
The death rate was practically level with the national average of 11.7 per 1,000 population whilst the actual number dropped from 94 in 1954 to 81.

I am sorry to report that the number of deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis remained the same as last year, namely 2. Lung cancer accounted also for 2 deaths or 50% of male cancer deaths, compared with the national average of 30.77%. This represents a decrease of 1 case over last year's figure.

There was a higher incidence of infectious diseases, mainly attributable to an outbreak of measles and whooping cough. The case of paratyphoid occurred in a patient who had previously suffered from the disease and had been pronounced free from infection. As she had just moved into the district and worked with children a specimen was submitted and returned positive.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee for their kindly consideration and interest and to Mr. C. Nelson and Mr. G. Beaty and staffs, for their help and kindness in my first year of office.

I am,
Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

The area of the district is 4,778 acres.

The number of inhabited houses is 2,391 and the number of new houses completed during the year was 5, and of these 1 was built with state assistance.

The rateable value is £47,049 and the sum represented by a penny rate is £186.

The estimated mid-year population is 7,320 and this figure is taken when calculating the Birth and Death rates.

VITAL STATISTICS

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	80	57	137
Illegitimate	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
Totals	<u>85</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>144</u>
Birth rate per 1,000 of the population .. 19.67			

Still Births

Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths. .. 33.55			

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	35	46	81
Death rate per 1,000 of the population .. 11.06			
Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis .. Nil			
Deaths from Other Puerperal Causes .. Nil			

Death Rate of Infants Under One Year

All infants (per 1,000 live births)	.. 20.83
Legitimate infants (per 1,000 legitimate births)	21.89
Illegitimate infants	.. Nil

Deaths from Cancer	.. 13
Deaths from Measles	.. Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough	.. Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea	.. Nil



CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH (Table 1)

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis (Respiratory)	2	-	2
Tuberculosis (Other)	-	-	-
Syphilitic Disease	1	-	1
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infections	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-
Other Infective & Parasitic Diseases	-	-	-
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	-	3	3
" " Lung	2	-	2
" " Breast	-	3	3
" " Uterus	-	-	-
Other Malignant & Lymphatic Neoplasms	2	3	5
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	-	-	-
Diabetes	-	2	2
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	2	9	11
Coronary Disease, Angina	8	4	12
Hypertension with Heart Disease	-	-	-
Other Heart Disease	2	12	14
Other Circulatory Disease	1	2	3
Influenza	-	-	-
Pneumonia	4	-	4
Bronchitis	3	1	4
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	1	-	1
Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum	-	-	-
Gastritis, Enteritis & Diarrhoea	-	-	-
Nephritis, Nephrosis	-	-	-
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	-	1
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	-	-	-
Congenital Malformations	-	-	-
Other Defined & Ill-defined Diseases	5	5	10
Motor Vehicle Accidents	-	-	-
All Other Accidents	-	2	2
Suicide	1	-	1
Homicide & Operations of War	-	-	-
	<u>35</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>81</u>

INFANT MORTALITY DURING YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1955.
(Giving certified causes)

<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Confined</u>	<u>Under 24 hours</u>	<u>1 - 2 weeks</u>
Prematurity	Hospital	1	-
Broncho-pneumonia	Home	-	2
	Total ..	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Table 3)

Scarlet Fever	1	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-
Whooping Cough	31	Puerperal Pyrexia	-
Diphtheria	-	Smallpox	-
Measles	209	Paratyphoid Fever	1
Pneumonia	-	Enteric Fever	-
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	-	Erysipelas	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	Food Poisoning	-
Dysentery	-		

TUBERCULOSIS (Table 4)

	<u>Under 5</u>	<u>15-24</u>	<u>25-44</u>	<u>45-65</u>	<u>Total</u>
Respiratory	1	4	-	-	5
Other	-	-	1	1	2
Total ..	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>

REPORT OF CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR1955.NUMBER OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEARFOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1955

Slaughterhouses	-	meat inspections	388	
Butcher's shops	-	" "	8	
Food premises	-	inspections	65	
" "	-	food inspections	26	487

HOUSING ACT 1936

Inspections	(section 5)	40	
"	(section 9)	18	
"	(section 11)	4	
"	(overcrowding)	3	65

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 1936

Drainage	19	
Tents, Vans and Sheds	3	
Verminous premises	25	
Nuisances	2	
Infectious diseases	3	52

FACTORIES ACT 1937

Inspections	-	factories with mechanical power	24	
"	-	factories with non-mechanical power	4	
"	-	building sites	2	30

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

Visits, surveys, treatments and administration	180
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MISCELLANEOUS

Slaughter of Animals Act 1954 - re. Slaughtering Licences	9	
Visits to butchers re. condemnation certificates	48	
" " " re. cleanliness of Slaughterhouses	11	
" " " re. hours of slaughtering	1	
Inspections during repairs and improvements to slaughterhouses	12	
Inspections of Milk Vehicles	6	
" " Scrap Metal Yards	1	
Visits re. milk sampling	14	
" re. water sampling	9	
" to Refuse Tip	4	
" " Sewage Works	2	
" " Waterworks	4	
" " Auction Mart	3	
" " Public Conveniences	6	130
Total number of visits & inspections made		944

WATER SUPPLY

The water supply was maintained throughout the year, despite the exceptionally hot, dry summer months. At no time was there any shortage. Results of bacteriological samples taken from the three main sources of supply indicated that the water was of satisfactory standard and free from pathogenic organisms..

Tenders were received (and one accepted) for the Senna Wells Scheme, but the proposed Northumberland County Council Water Scheme whereby 350,000 gallons would be provided daily to a service reservoir on Alnwick Moor by the year 1961, may mean the abandonment of the Senna Wells Scheme.

	Results of water samples (bacteriological)			
	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV
Alnwick High Supply	3	-	-	-
" Low "	2	-	1 (count 3)	-
Duke's Supply	3	-	-	-
	8	-	1	-

Classification of Piped Water Supplies

(Ministry of Health, Housing & Local Government Report No. 71)

	Presumptive Coliform count per 100 ml.
Class I Highly Satisfactory	less than 1
" II Satisfactory	1 - 2
" III Suspicious	3 - 10
" IV Unsatisfactory	greater than 10

The great majority of the samples ought to fall into Classes I or II. An occasional drop to Class III need not evoke any great alarm, but if the water is frequently assigned to Class III, or drops to Class IV it may be assumed that its purity is below standard.

HOUSING

The Council now owns 927 houses, 432 of which have been built since 1945. There are no immediate schemes in hand.

Improvement Grants - Housing Act 1949

Applications received during the year	2
Applications approved	2
Total number of applications approved in the area since inception of scheme	22

Details of proposals submitted to Ministry under
Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954.Part I

- (i) Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954, and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25 of the Housing Act 1936. 240
- (ii) Period in years which the Council think necessary for securing the demolition of all the houses in (i) 15

Part II

- | | | |
|-------|--|-----|
| (iii) | Number of houses in (i) in clearance areas and already covered by operative clearance or compulsory purchase orders, or owned by the local authority. | Nil |
| (iv) | Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders have been submitted to the Minister but have not yet become operative. | Nil |

Part III

- | | | |
|--------|--|-----|
| (v) | Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders are to be made or which are to be purchased by agreement within the five years. | Nil |
| (vi) | Number of houses which are to be included in clearance areas still to be declared and which within the five years will be owned by the local authority or will have been included in a clearance order or a compulsory purchase order submitted to the Minister. | 240 |
| (vii) | Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v), and (vi) to be patched (if necessary) and retained within the five years under Section 2 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 for temporary accommodation. | Nil |
| (viii) | Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v), and (vi) to be demolished in the five years. | 80 |
| (ix) | Number of houses (including those already comprised in operative demolition orders) to be demolished in the five years as a result of action under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936. | Nil |

Action taken with regard to Unfit Houses

<u>Closing and Demolition</u>	<u>No. of houses</u>
1. Houses demolished in Clearance Areas.	-
2. Houses demolished not in Clearance Areas.	1
3. Houses closed, not demolished.	1
4. Any other houses permanently discontinued as dwellings and not included in above.	1

Repairs

Houses made fit by procedure under either Housing or Public Health Acts.

- | | | |
|-----|--|----|
| (1) | By informal action | 19 |
| (2) | By owners, following statutory notice. | - |
| (3) | By local authority in default of owners. | - |
| (4) | Demolition Orders revoked after reconstructions. | - |

SUPERVISION OF FOOD1. Slaughterhouse

The municipal-owned slaughterhouse was continued to be let on a yearly rental to the local butchers. All butchers who desired to use the slaughterhouse were provided with accommodation.

There are no private slaughterhouses in the district. During the year improvements were carried out by providing an office, with washing facilities and hot and cold water for the meat inspector; also an additional water closet and washing facilities for the slaughtermen.

Failure by the butchers to keep the front and rear yards of the slaughterhouse clean made it necessary for the local authority to undertake the cleansing of such. This is carried out by two workmen twice weekly and the cost of such charged to the butchers.

It is a well-known fact that the Slaughterhouse is completely out dated and obsolete according to modern standards. The standard of hygiene is poor, and one looks forward to new regulations to control hygiene in slaughterhouses.

All condemned carcase meat and offal is dyed green and collected from the Slaughterhouse by a Tyneside firm of by-products, where it is sterilised and converted into fertiliser and animal feeding stuffs.

Carcases and Offal Inspected and Condemned in Whole or Part

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number Killed.	1731	223	199	5478	1420	Nil
Number inspected.	1731	223	199	5478	1420	Nil
<u>All diseases excepted</u> <u>Tuberculosis & Cysticerci</u> <u>Whole carcases condemned.</u>	4	19	7	54	Nil	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	508	90	9	428	63	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis & cysticerci.	29.00	48.88	8.04	8.80	4.44	-
<u>Tuberculosis only</u> <u>Whole carcases condemned.</u>	4	1	-	-	1	-
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	62	25	1	-	18	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis.	3.81	11.66	0.5	-	1.34	-
<u>Cysticercosis</u> Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	1	1	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned.	-	-	-	-	-	-

2. Food Inspection

26 visits were made to foodshops for the purpose of food inspection and the following were voluntarily surrendered and disposed of by controlled tipping at the refuse tip.

	Total weight	
	lbs	ozs
55 tins cooked meat	209	15
57 tins vegetables	54	8
60 tins fruit	69	0
16 tins milk	10	2
6 tins fish	2	7
5 pkts. cheese spread	1	2
2 pkts. cereals	3	0
55 stems bananas	1622	0
2 legs roast pork	18	3
pork sausage	14	0
poultry - 3 hens	7	9
total weight	2011	14

Total weight of food stuffs condemned .9 tons.

3. Milk

There is no change in the number of producer/retailers and distributors of milk, and milk is retailed by seven suppliers as follows:-

Milk sold by	No:	Designation of milk sold			
		T.T.	Undesignated	Paturised	Sterilised
Producers/Retailers	3	1	2	-	-
Distributors	3	1	-	3	2
" (Supplementary Licence)	1	1	-	-	-
Total	7	3	2	3	2

Results of Milk Samples (Bacteriological) Methylene Blue

<u>Grade of milk</u>	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Tuberculin tested	6	1
Undesignated	2	6
Pasteurised	25 *	-
T.T. Pasturised	4 *	-

* Samples taken by the County Health Inspector at the Alnwick Creamery.

Although there is no statutory standard laid down for undesignated milk, it is considered that such milk should have the same keeping quality as designated milk, i.e. Tuberculin tested, and the above table is based on these lines.

As the keeping quality of the undesignated milk was unsatisfactory and such milk was retailed by two dairy farmers, a letter was sent to the County Milk Production Officer asking for inspections to be carried out at the dairies concerned. On inspection it was found that at one of the dairies the methods of milk production were satisfactory and complied with the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949, whilst conditions at the other dairy were unsatisfactory and the methods of production were described as "appalling". Further inspections were carried out where an improvement in condition was recorded.

To ensure a safe milk supply the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, has declared various areas in the country to be "specified areas". In such areas only designated milk, i.e. pasteurised, sterilised and tuberculin tested is allowed to be sold for human consumption. Sale of undesignated milk is not allowed by law. It is to be regretted that to date the North Northumberland Area has not been declared a "specified area".

Two samples of undesignated milk were submitted to the Laboratory for tests for the presence of the tuberculosis organism, and a positive result was obtained from one of the samples.

An examination of the herd in question was carried out by a Veterinary Officer, and the effected cow was slaughtered under the Tuberculosis Order 1938.

One can visualize the acute danger to public health when the cow giving tuberculous milk was found on the same farm where "appalling" conditions were found in the methods of milk production.

4. Ice Cream

There are 25 premises registered for the sale of ice cream and two premises for manufacture and sale. In all of the twenty-five premises registered for sale, only pre-wrapped ice cream is sold. Both ice cream plants are inspected regularly.

REMOVAL OF REFUSE

The removal of all refuse is carried out with 2 Bedford vehicles, each of 7 cu. yds. capacity. The manpower per vehicle is 1 driver and 1 filler, and 1 driver and 2 fillers. Both drivers assist in filling. The vehicle with 1 driver and 1 filler is employed in the centre of the town, and collects practically all trade refuse.

Refuse is collect weekly from all houses in the district other than a few isolated dwellings on Alnwick Moor.

During the year a scheme was devised whereby a charge was made for the removal of trade refuse. This was based on the amount of refuse collected, the first bin being collected free of charge, and a charge of 10/- per year, per bin, made in excess of one. Each trader was given the option of removing his own trade refuse to the tip or joining the scheme.

The total number of traders contributing to the scheme is 41, and the total sum of £49. 10s. was collected during the year. All refuse is tipped at the East Cawledge Park site, and the controlled method of tipping is used. There is no salvage collected and all waste paper is burnt at the tip. No record is kept of the weight's of refuse collected.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949

	Type of Property Non-Agricultural				Agricul- tural.
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	All other (including Business Premises)	Total of Col. (1) (2) & (3)	
I. Number of properties in district	7	2391	670	3068	14
II. Number of properties as a result of					
(a) Notifications	-	31	3	34	-
(b) Survey under the Act.	3	32	3	38	
(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose.	1	15	61	77	
III. Total inspections carried out including re-inspections.	7	97	88	192	
IV. Number of properties inspected (in Sec. II) which were found to be infested by:					
(a) Rats	2	36	2	40	
(b) Mice	1	11	5	17	
V. Number of infested properties (in Sec IV) treated by L. A.	3	44	2	49	
VI. Total treatments carried out including re-treatments.	6	59	3	68	

A heavy rat infestation was found at the refuse tip and treatment was carried out in three stages (i) gassing (ii) pre-baiting and poison baiting (iii) further pre-baiting and poison baiting, using a different bait base and poison. 494 bodies were recovered.

The "twice yearly" treatment of sewers was carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. No new areas of infestation were found.

FACTORIES ACT 1937 & 1948Part 1 of the Act

1. INSPECTIONS for purpose of provisions as to health.

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Secs. 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6, are to be enforced by the Local Authority.	8	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	42	24	-	-
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-workers' premises)	2	4	-	-
Total:	52	32	-	-

2. CASES in which defects were found.

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects found				Number of cases in which prose- cutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (s. 1)	2	2	-	-	-
Overcrowding (s. 2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (s. 3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (s. 4)	1	1	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (s. 6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (s. 7)					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	6	6	-	1	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	1	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
Total:	10	10	-	1	-



